

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of the claims will replace all prior listings and versions of the claims in the application.

**Listing of the Claims**

Claim 1 (original): A tool for use in removal of split shot weights from fishing line, including:

- a) a finger sheath having a round cross section adapted to fit over a finger tip, said finger sheath having a first end and a second end such that the first end has a smaller cross sectional area than the second end;
- b) a finger retainer, extending across the first end of the finger sheath, whereby when a finger tip is placed within the finger sheath it is retained therein by the finger retainer; and
- c) a curved blade having a curvature matching a radius of curvature of the finger sheath at a position near the second end of the finger sheath, the curved blade being attached to the finger sheath at the position and extending beyond the finger retainer.

Claim 2 (original): The tool of claim 1, further including a "U" shaped clip, having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the finger sheath roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the first end of the finger sheath.

Claim 3 (original): The tool of claim 1, wherein the finger retainer and the finger sheath are one integral piece.

Claim 4 (original): The tool of claim 1, wherein the finger retainer is attached to the finger sheath.

Claim 5 (original): The tool of claim 1, wherein the finger retainer covers the entire first end of the finger sheath.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The tool of claim [[1]]3, wherein the finger sheath has an approximately circular cross section and comprises a surface that approximates a part of the surface of a right angle cone between two parallel planes each of which is normal to an axis of the cone and wherein the surface of the finger sheath is one continuous piece.

Claim 7 (original): The tool of claim 1, wherein the finger sheath includes two rings connected by a connecting bar that is approximately perpendicular to each of the two rings.

Claim 8 (original): The tool of claim 1, wherein the finger sheath, finger retainer and curved blade are each made of a metal.

Claim 9 (original): The tool of claim 2, wherein the finger sheath, the finger retainer, and the curved blade, each include a metal chosen from the group consisting of aluminum, steel, stainless steel, brass and copper.

Claim 10 (original): The tool of claim 3, wherein the finger retainer covers the entire first end of the finger sheath.

Claim 11 (original): The tool of claim 9, wherein the "U" shaped clip is made of spring metal.

Claim 12 (original): The tool of claim 9 wherein the spring metal is spring steel.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The tool of claim 10, wherein the finger sheath and finger retainer are parts of a thimble, wherein the thimble comprises an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and the closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger tip within the cavity and wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end and whereby the body is the finger sheath and the closed end is the finger retainer.

Claim 14 (Canceled).

Claim 15 (currently amended): The tool of claim ~~[[14]]~~13, further including a "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The tool of claim ~~[[14]]~~13, wherein the thimble includes a metal chosen from the group consisting of aluminum, steel, stainless steel, brass and copper.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The tool of claim ~~[[14]]~~13, wherein the thimble is a sewing thimble.

Claim 18 (currently amended): The tool of claim ~~[[15]]~~13, wherein the thimble is of the type having a body which comprises a first portion extending from the closed end which approximates a part of a right angle cone between two parallel planes each of which is normal to an axis of the cone, and a second portion extending from the first portion which approximates a cylinder a sewing thimble.

Claim 19 (currently amended): A tool suitable for use with split shot including:

- a) a thimble ~~having~~comprising an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and the closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, and wherein the thimble is of a type which includes a first portion extending from the closed end which approximates a part of a right angle cone between two parallel planes each of which is normal to an axis of the cone, and a second portion extending from the first portion which approximates a cylinder; and
- b) a curved blade having a curvature matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at a position on the first portion of the thimble which is near the

second ~~part~~portion, the curved blade being attached to the thimble at the position and extending beyond the closed end.

Claim 20 (original): The tool of claim 19, further including a "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.

Claim 21 (original): The tool of claim 19, wherein the thimble includes a metal chosen from the group consisting of aluminum, steel, stainless steel, brass and copper.

Claim 22 (original): A method of opening a split shot having a closed slot that is crimped around a fishing line including the acts of:

- a) placing a tool onto a finger tip, the tool including a thimble having an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, and wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end, and a curved blade having a curvature matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at a position near the open end, the curved blade being attached to the thimble at the position and extending beyond the closed end;
- b) placing the curved blade into the closed slot; and
- c) manipulating the curved blade to open the slot.

Claim 23 (original): The method of claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade includes pushing on the curved blade.

Claim 24 (original): The method of claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade includes twisting the curved blade.

Claim 25 (original): The method of claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade includes dragging the curved blade through the slot.